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other Jonah pictures, on lamps, rings, etc., are disposed of more rapidly, a chapter for each class.

The survey is naturally followed by two chapters treating respectively of the origin of the Jonah pictures and their significance. The attempts which have been repeatedly made to trace them to heathen models are unfavorably criticised. Whilst not denying the influence of heathen art to some extent, Mitius finds the origin of these pictures elsewhere. He regards it as highly probable that the church obtained the idea of Jonah as a signal example of God's saving power from the liturgy of the synagogue in association with two other favorite examples: the three youths in the furnace, and Daniel in the lions' den. The idea was incorporated in the Christian liturgy, and thus became quickly known to all. When it had got a firm hold of the popular fancy, it was appropriated by art. This view has probably some truth in it. A Jewish origin of the early Christian conception of Jonah is quite possible. There can be no doubt that the worship of the church owes much to that of the synagogue. But it can hardly be questioned that the interest of the early Christians in Jonah was greatly quickened by the reference recorded in the gospels, if not created by it. The three scenes which seem to have attracted them most were Jonah's peril, Jonah's deliverance, and Jonah's rest on the seashore, the last, as already observed, being an addition to the Bible story. These symbolized respectively death, the resurrection, and the rest of paradise.

The illustrations are regrettably few—only five out of one hundred and eighty examples—and all refer to comparatively late productions. As good illustrated works on the catacombs are inaccessible to many students, a selection of the most notable catacomb pictures would have added considerably to the interest of the book. We hope that future writings of the same kind from the scholarly pen of Mitius will be enriched with a larger amount of artistic decoration.

W. TAYLOR SMITH.

EXETER, ENGLAND.

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THE DECIAN PERSECUTION. By J. A. F. GREGG. Hulsean Prize Essay for 1896. Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood & Sons, 1897. 6s.

"It may well be doubted whether Christianity was ever called upon to endure a more damaging assault than was directed against it by Decius. Without sound discipline, without previous experience,

the church was challenged in 250 to face for the first time the concentrated onset of the powers of this world: all future ages, on the other hand, could look back to the example of the victory, and be guided by the bitter experience which had written the history of that year of discipline in letters of blood."

Our author has presented a work on this somewhat obscure, but important period, which, while invaluable to the student, is also adapted to the wants of an intelligent English reader. It possesses two marked merits. First: Every available iota of information has been subjected to the most minute criticism. An intellectual danger, however, attends this process. As when one spends too much time in reading fine and blurred print, with a tallow candle, near-sightedness results, so the habit of minute criticism incapacitates for a broad historical view. Concentration of attention upon minutiae diminishes the power of generalization. The biographer of Alexander Campbell claims that the close examination and comparison of verbal details, demanded in his revision of the translation of the Acts of the Apostles, rendered him unable to take that powerful grasp of a subject for which he had been so conspicuous; and that for quite a period after the completion of his task his pulpit efforts ceased to manifest their former unity and point.

But this minute investigation is as essential to historical perfection as a minute topographical survey to success in landscape gardening. Our author has mastered the minutiae without allowing the minutiae to master him and suppress the power of generalization.

In the second place: The treatise is characterized by the absence of rash conjecture. It is a common habit to read one's own presuppositions into a history. A gentleman, stopping a few days in one of our cities, and desiring to make some historical investigations connected with the locality, asked a friend if he could direct him to anyone likely to have the documents. "Go to Dr. B.," was the answer. "If he has not the documents, he can evolve all the facts out of his own consciousness." Owing to the absence of documents, the historical writer is, at times, compelled to enter the realm of conjecture. Conjectures, however, need not be random guesses. The conjecture may be such a perfect explanation of all the circumstances as to carry an absolute conviction of its truth.

We commend the work to the general reader and to the student as combining critical scholarship with a comprehensive grasp of the situation.

HAMILTON, N. Y.

W. H. MAYNARD.